EXPLORING THE QUR'AN & SCIENCE

SERIES 6

MEDICAL MIRACLES IN THE QUR'AN

Embryology, Breastfeeding, Honey, Black Seed, Cupping & Skin



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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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وَإِذَا مَرِضْتُ فَهُوَ يَشْفِينِ

"And when I am ill, it is He who cures me."

SURAH ASH-SHU'ARA' 26:80

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

All praise is due to Allah, who has not sent down any disease without sending down its cure, and who placed in honey healing for people. Blessings and peace be upon the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who taught his ummah to seek treatment while relying on Allah, and upon his family and his Companions.

This article is specially dedicated to my beloved wife,

ZAHARAH MOHD LATIF;

my dear children,

MUHAMMAD HAFIZ, NOOR HAZWANI, ABDUL HAKIM, NOOR HIDAYAH, NOR AQILA and **NOR ATIQAH**;

and my sons- and daughters-in-law,

FAZILAH, MALEK, HANIN, FAIRIZAL and **FIRWAN**.

May this article remind us that health is a trust, that ***"when I am ill, it is He who cures me"*** (26:80) — and may it be 'ilmun yuntafa'u bih, knowledge that brings benefit.

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ABOUT THE COVER OF THIS ARTICLE

The cover of this article does not depict any human being. It shows **a golden DNA double helix** — a symbol of the secret of human creation — flanked by **a piece of honeycomb filled with honey** and **a handful of black seeds** (Nigella sativa), with particles of light floating against a dark background.

The DNA represents the theme of human creation in the womb (23:12–14). **The honeycomb** represents the words of Allah about honey: ***"in which there is healing for people"*** (16:69). **The black seeds** represent the words of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ about the black seed (Sahih Muslim 2215).

Two gold lines at the bottom frame the author's name.

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Colour guide: green box = verses of the Qur'an; gold box = Hadith; blue box = scientific finding; blue table = comparison. Underlined blue narrator names can be clicked to open the narrator's page on sunnah.com.

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MEDICAL MIRACLES IN THE QUR'AN

Islam is not only a religion of worship; it also teaches its followers to care for the body as a trust. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ encouraged his ummah ***to seek treatment***, for every disease that Allah sends down has a cure:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 5678

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْمُثَنَّى، حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو أَحْمَدَ الزُّبَيْرِيُّ، حَدَّثَنَا عُمَرُ بْنُ سَعِيدِ بْنِ أَبِي حُسَيْنٍ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي عَطَاءُ بْنُ أَبِي رَبَاحٍ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ ـ رضى الله عنه ـ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ «مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ دَاءً إِلاَّ أَنْزَلَ لَهُ شِفَاءً».

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: **"Allah has not sent down any disease without sending down a cure for it."**

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Muhammad bin al-Muthanna, from Abu Ahmad al-Zubairi, from 'Umar bin Sa'id bin Abi Husain, from 'Ata' bin Abi Rabah, from Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه, from the Prophet ﷺ.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Medicine, Hadith No. 5678.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:5678

This article gathers ***six medical indications*** in the Qur'an and Sunnah: the creation of the fetus in the womb, the period of nursing, honey, the black seed, cupping, and the skin as a sense organ for pain. For each, ***the exegesis of the scholars and authentic Hadith come first***, then ***the scientific findings are assessed honestly*** — including where the evidence is still weak.

Note: The translation of the Qur'anic verses in this article is Sahih International. The grading of each Hadith is stated in the Hadith box, with a link to sunnah.com. Every scientific finding is given with a link to its original source. This article is **not medical advice***; consult a doctor for the treatment of illness.*

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THE CREATION OF MAN IN THE WOMB

SURAH AL-MU'MINUN 23:12–14

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ مِن سُلَٰلَةٍ مِّن طِينٍ ﴿١٢﴾

And certainly did We create man from an extract of clay.

ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَٰهُ نُطْفَةً فِى قَرَارٍ مَّكِينٍ ﴿١٣﴾

Then We placed him as a sperm-drop in a firm lodging.

ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا ٱلنُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا ٱلْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً فَخَلَقْنَا ٱلْمُضْغَةَ عِظَٰمًا فَكَسَوْنَا ٱلْعِظَٰمَ لَحْمًا ثُمَّ أَنشَأْنَٰهُ خَلْقًا ءَاخَرَ ۚ فَتَبَارَكَ ٱللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ ٱلْخَٰلِقِينَ ﴿١٤﴾

Then We made the sperm-drop into a clinging clot, and We made the clot into a lump [of flesh], and We made [from] the lump, bones, and We covered the bones with flesh; then We developed him into another creation. So blessed is Allah, the best of creators.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/23:12-14

COMMENTARY ON 23:12–14

Imam Ibn Kathir explains that these verses mention two creations: the creation of Prophet Adam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ ***"from an extract of clay"***, and then the creation of his descendants ***"as a sperm-drop in a firm lodging"***, that is, the womb. Verse 14 details stage after stage until Allah ***"developed him into another creation"*** when the soul is breathed into him. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 23:14

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Qur'anic term	Linguistic meaning	Approximate time*	What embryology observes
Nutfah (23:13)	A drop of fluid; "amshāj" = mixed (76:2)	Week 1 (Carnegie 1–3)	Fertilisation: a zygote from the male cell and the female ovum
Qarārin makīn (23:13)	A firm place of lodging	Weeks 1–2 (Carnegie 4–5)	The blastocyst embeds in the wall of the womb (implantation)
'Alaqah (23:14)	Something that clings; a leech; a clot of blood	Weeks 3–4 (Carnegie 6–12)	The embryo hangs on the womb; elongated shape; early heart & vessels
Mudghah (23:14; 22:5)	A lump of flesh as if chewed	Weeks 4–6 (Carnegie 10–16)	Segmented somites; limb buds; partly formed, partly unformed
'Iẓām (23:14)	Bones	Week 7 (Carnegie 18)	Ossification (bone formation) begins
Kasawnal-'iẓāma laḥmā (23:14)	The bones clothed with flesh	Weeks 7–8 (Carnegie 18–23)	Muscles arrange around the skeleton; body and limbs fully shaped
Khalqan ākhar (23:14)	Another creation	Week 9 onwards	Fetal period: growth and maturation of organs

** Approximate time after fertilisation, from the Carnegie staging table. The match is at the level of general concept, not exact equivalence.*

Figure 1: Qur'anic terms and stages of embryology — a match at the level of general concept.

SCIENTIFIC FINDING: THE VIEW OF AN EMBRYOLOGIST

Professor Keith L. Moore of the University of Toronto, author of a well-known embryology textbook, wrote that the terms ***'alaqah*** (something that clings; a leech) and ***mudghah*** (a chewed-like lump of flesh) correspond to the appearance of the embryo in the early weeks — an embryo clinging to the wall of the womb, and a segmented embryo (somites) resembling tooth marks.

STUDY REFERENCES:

Moore, K.L. (1986). A Scientist's Interpretation of References to Embryology in the Qur'an. Journal of the Islamic Medical Association of North America, 18(1). https://doi.org/10.5915/18-1-8693

REFLECTION — CAUTION IN MATCHING

Moore's interpretation is widely accepted by proponents of I'jaz 'Ilmi, but it has also been criticised by some scholars — Muslim and non-Muslim — who hold that these terms should be understood by their Arabic meanings at the time of revelation. The match is at the ***level of general concept***, not an exact equation. A full explanation, including the Hadith of Ibn Mas'ud رضى الله عنه on the forty-day periods, is in

Series 2: The Creation of Man — From Nutfah to Fetus.

TWO COMPLETE YEARS OF NURSING

SURAH AL-BAQARAH 2:233

۞ وَٱلۡوَٰلِدَٰتُ يُرۡضِعۡنَ أَوۡلَٰدَهُنَّ حَوۡلَيۡنِ كَامِلَيۡنِۖ لِمَنۡ أَرَادَ أَن يُتِمَّ ٱلرَّضَاعَةَۚ وَعَلَى ٱلۡمَوۡلُودِ لَهُۥ رِزۡقُهُنَّ وَكِسۡوَتُهُنَّ بِٱلۡمَعۡرُوفِۚ لَا تُكَلَّفُ نَفۡسٌ إِلَّا وُسۡعَهَاۚ لَا تُضَآرَّ وَٰلِدَةُۢ بِوَلَدِهَا وَلَا مَوۡلُودٞ لَّهُۥ بِوَلَدِهِۦۚ وَعَلَى ٱلۡوَارِثِ مِثۡلُ ذَٰلِكَۗ فَإِنۡ أَرَادَا فِصَالًا عَن تَرَاضٖ مِّنۡهُمَا وَتَشَاوُرٖ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيۡهِمَاۗ وَإِنۡ أَرَدتُّمۡ أَن تَسۡتَرۡضِعُوٓاْ أَوۡلَٰدَكُمۡ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيۡكُمۡ إِذَا سَلَّمۡتُم مَّآ ءَاتَيۡتُم بِٱلۡمَعۡرُوفِۗ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَٱعۡلَمُوٓاْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِمَا تَعۡمَلُونَ بَصِيرٞ ٢٣٣

Mothers may breastfeed their children two complete years for whoever wishes to complete the nursing [period]. Upon the father is the mothers' provision and their clothing according to what is acceptable. No person is charged with more than his capacity. No mother should be harmed through her child, and no father through his child. And upon the [father's] heir is [a duty] like that [of the father]. And if they both desire weaning through mutual consent from both of them and consultation, there is no blame upon either of them. And if you wish to have your children nursed by a substitute, there is no blame upon you as long as you give payment according to what is acceptable. And fear Allah and know that Allah is Seeing of what you do.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/2:233

COMMENTARY ON 2:233

Allah says: ***"Mothers may breastfeed their children two complete years for whoever wishes to complete the nursing [period]"***. Imam Ibn Kathir explains that this is ***guidance from Allah to mothers*** to complete nursing for two years; after that period, nursing no longer counts for the rulings of milk-kinship. The same verse allows parents to wean earlier ***"through mutual consent from both of them and consultation"***. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 2:233

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SCIENTIFIC FINDING: THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION'S RECOMMENDATION

The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends ***exclusive breastfeeding*** for the first six months, followed by continued breastfeeding ***up to two years of age or beyond*** together with appropriate complementary foods.

Lokossou and colleagues (2022), in ***Frontiers in Immunology***, explain that breast milk is not merely food: it contains immune cells, antibodies and bioactive molecules that help protect the baby from infection and shape its immune system.

STUDY REFERENCES:

World Health Organization. Infant and young child feeding (fact sheet). https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/infant-and-young-child-feeding

Lokossou, G.A.G. et al. (2022). Human Breast Milk: From Food to Active Immune Response With Disease Protection in Infants and Mothers. Frontiers in Immunology, 13, 849012. https://doi.org/10.3389/fimmu.2022.849012

REFLECTION — IN HARMONY, WITH FLEXIBILITY

The period of ***two complete years*** in the Qur'an is in harmony with the WHO recommendation today. Yet the verse itself gives ***flexibility*** — "for whoever wishes to complete the nursing" and weaning earlier by mutual consent. It is guidance of mercy, not a burden; and its benefits are now understood more deeply by science.

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HONEY — HEALING FOR PEOPLE

SURAH AN-NAHL 16:68–69

وَأَوۡحَىٰ رَبُّكَ إِلَى ٱلنَّحۡلِ أَنِ ٱتَّخِذِي مِنَ ٱلۡجِبَالِ بُيُوتٗا وَمِنَ ٱلشَّجَرِ وَمِمَّا يَعۡرِشُونَ ٦٨

And your Lord inspired to the bee, "Take for yourself among the mountains, houses, and among the trees and [in] that which they construct."

ثُمَّ كُلِي مِن كُلِّ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ فَٱسۡلُكِي سُبُلَ رَبِّكِ ذُلُلٗاۚ يَخۡرُجُ مِنۢ بُطُونِهَا شَرَابٞ مُّخۡتَلِفٌ أَلۡوَٰنُهُۥ فِيهِ شِفَآءٞ لِّلنَّاسِۗ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَأٓيَةٗ لِّقَوۡمٖ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ٦٩

Then eat from all the fruits and follow the ways of your Lord laid down [for you]." There emerges from their bellies a drink, varying in colors, in which there is healing for people. Indeed in that is a sign for a people who give thought."

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/16:68-69

COMMENTARY ON 16:68–69

First: Inspiration to the bee. ***"your Lord inspired to the bee"*** — to build its houses, eat from the fruits and follow the ways made easy for it, and then there emerges ***"a drink, varying in colors"***.

Second: "In which there is healing". Imam Ibn Kathir explains that in honey there is healing for ***various ailments*** that afflict people. He cites the view that the word ***shifā'*** (without "al-") means there ***is*** healing in it — not a cure for everything. Mujahid interpreted it as the Qur'an; Ibn Kathir said that meaning is true in itself, but the apparent sense of this verse is honey — with the following Hadith as proof. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 16:69

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HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 2217 (AGREED UPON)

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْمُثَنَّى، وَمُحَمَّدُ بْنُ بَشَّارٍ، - وَاللَّفْظُ لاِبْنِ الْمُثَنَّى - قَالاَ حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ جَعْفَرٍ، حَدَّثَنَا شُعْبَةُ، عَنْ قَتَادَةَ، عَنْ أَبِي الْمُتَوَكِّلِ، عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ الْخُدْرِيِّ، قَالَ جَاءَ رَجُلٌ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم فَقَالَ إِنَّ أَخِي اسْتَطْلَقَ بَطْنُهُ. فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم «اسْقِهِ عَسَلاً». فَسَقَاهُ ثُمَّ جَاءَهُ فَقَالَ إِنِّي سَقَيْتُهُ عَسَلاً فَلَمْ يَزِدْهُ إِلاَّ اسْتِطْلاَقًا. فَقَالَ لَهُ ثَلاَثَ مَرَّاتٍ ثُمَّ جَاءَ الرَّابِعَةَ فَقَالَ «اسْقِهِ عَسَلاً». فَقَالَ لَقَدْ سَقَيْتُهُ فَلَمْ يَزِدْهُ إِلاَّ اسْتِطْلاَقًا. فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم «صَدَقَ اللَّهُ وَكَذَبَ بَطْنُ أَخِيكَ». فَسَقَاهُ فَبَرَأَ.

TRANSLATION:

Abu Sa'id al-Khudri رضى الله عنه said: A man came to the Prophet ﷺ and said: "My brother has loose bowels."

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **"Give him honey to drink."** So he gave him some, then came back and said: "I gave him honey, but it only made his bowels looser." He said this to him three times. Then he came the fourth time, and he said: **"Give him honey to drink."** He said: "I did give him, but it only made his bowels looser." So the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **"Allah has spoken the truth, and your brother's stomach has lied."** So he gave him (honey) to drink, and he recovered.

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Muhammad bin al-Muthanna and Muhammad bin Bashshar, from Muhammad bin Ja'far, from Shu'bah, from Qatadah, from Abu al-Mutawakkil, from Abu Sa'id al-Khudri رضى الله عنه, from the Prophet ﷺ.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Greetings, Hadith No. 2217 (narration 2217a); also narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Hadith No. 5684.

GRADE: SAHIH — Agreed upon (Muttafaq 'alaih): narrated by al-Bukhari (No. 5684) and Muslim (No. 2217).

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:2217

SCIENTIFIC FINDING: HONEY IN WOUND CARE

A Cochrane review (2015) of 26 clinical trials found ***high-quality evidence*** that honey dressings heal ***partial-thickness burns*** faster than conventional dressings (about 4.7 days sooner). For most other wound types, the evidence is still weak.

This effect is linked to honey's acidity, its very high sugar concentration (osmotic effect), and the hydrogen peroxide it slowly produces.

STUDY REFERENCES:

Jull, A.B. et al. (2015). Honey as a topical treatment for wounds. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews, CD005083.pub4. https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.CD005083.pub4

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SCIENTIFIC FINDING: WARNING: NO HONEY FOR BABIES UNDER ONE YEAR

Honey can contain spores of the bacterium ***Clostridium botulinum***. A baby's immature gut allows these spores to multiply and produce toxin (infant botulism). Health authorities therefore recommend that ***honey should not be given to infants under 12 months of age***.

STUDY REFERENCES:

Tanzi, M.G. & Gabay, M.P. (2002). Association Between Honey Consumption and Infant Botulism. Pharmacotherapy. https://doi.org/10.1592/phco.22.16.1479.33696

REFLECTION — HEALING BY THE PERMISSION OF ALLAH

The story in the Hadith above teaches two things: ***certainty*** in the guidance of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and ***patience*** in treatment. Science supports the benefits of honey, especially for burns. Yet "healing" does not mean without limits — honey is still unsuitable for babies under one year, and care is needed for people with diabetes.

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THE BLACK SEED

The black seed (***Nigella sativa***) was mentioned specifically by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ:

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 2215 (AGREED UPON)

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ رُمْحِ بْنِ الْمُهَاجِرِ، أَخْبَرَنَا اللَّيْثُ، عَنْ عُقَيْلٍ، عَنِ ابْنِ شِهَابٍ، أَخْبَرَنِي أَبُو سَلَمَةَ بْنُ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ، وَسَعِيدُ بْنُ الْمُسَيَّبِ، أَنَّ أَبَا هُرَيْرَةَ، أَخْبَرَهُمَا أَنَّهُ، سَمِعَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَقُولُ «إِنَّ فِي الْحَبَّةِ السَّوْدَاءِ شِفَاءً مِنْ كُلِّ دَاءٍ إِلاَّ السَّامَ». وَالسَّامُ الْمَوْتُ. وَالْحَبَّةُ السَّوْدَاءُ الشُّونِيزُ.

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه reported that he heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: **"Indeed, in the black seed there is a cure for every disease except al-sam."** Al-sam is death, and the black seed is al-shuniz.

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Muhammad bin Rumh bin al-Muhajir, from al-Laith bin Sa'd, from 'Uqail, from Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri, from Abu Salamah bin 'Abd al-Rahman and Sa'id bin al-Musayyib, from Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه, from the Prophet ﷺ.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Greetings, Hadith No. 2215 (narration 2215a); also narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Hadith No. 5688.

GRADE: SAHIH — Agreed upon (Muttafaq 'alaih): narrated by al-Bukhari (No. 5688) and Muslim (No. 2215).

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:2215a

SCIENTIFIC FINDING: WHAT MODERN STUDIES SAY

Li and colleagues (2023), in ***Frontiers in Nutrition***, assessed ***20 meta-analyses*** on the black seed. Overall, it was found ***beneficial*** for various clinical outcomes — among them blood sugar, blood lipids, blood pressure and markers of inflammation.

But the same authors stress that the methodological quality of most studies is ***low*** — of 110 outcome indicators, only five were graded as moderate-quality evidence — and larger, high-quality clinical trials are still needed.

STUDY REFERENCES:

Li, Z. et al. (2023). Nigella sativa and health outcomes: An overview of systematic reviews and meta-analyses. Frontiers in Nutrition, 10, 1107750. https://doi.org/10.3389/fnut.2023.1107750

REFLECTION — UNDERSTANDING "A CURE FOR EVERY DISEASE"

This Hadith is authentic, and we believe in it. But it does not mean the black seed ***replaces*** other treatment. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ himself mentioned honey and cupping as remedies (Sahih al-

Bukhari 5681), and said that ***every*** disease has a cure (Sahih al-Bukhari 5678) — a cure that must be sought. So the black seed is ***a blessed supporting means***, taken alongside the medical treatment that is needed, not a reason to abandon it.

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CUPPING (HIJAMAH)

Cupping is a treatment that draws blood through small incisions in the skin. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ mentioned it together with honey:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 5681

حَدَّثَنِي مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الرَّحِيمِ، أَخْبَرَنَا سُرَيْجُ بْنُ يُونُسَ أَبُو الْحَارِثِ، حَدَّثَنَا مَرْوَانُ بْنُ شُجَاعٍ، عَنْ سَالِمٍ الأَفْطَسِ، عَنْ سَعِيدِ بْنِ جُبَيْرٍ، عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ «الشِّفَاءُ فِي ثَلاَثَةٍ شَرْطَةِ مِحْجَمٍ، أَوْ شَرْبَةِ عَسَلٍ، أَوْ كَيَّةٍ بِنَارٍ، وَأَنْهَى أُمَّتِي عَنِ الْكَيِّ».

TRANSLATION:

Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: **"Healing is in three things: the incision of the cupper, a drink of honey, or branding with fire (al-kayy); and I forbid my ummah from branding."**

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Muhammad bin 'Abd al-Rahim, from Suraij bin Yunus Abu al-Harith, from Marwan bin Shuja', from Salim al-Aftas, from Sa'id bin Jubair, from 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما, from the Prophet ﷺ.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Medicine, Hadith No. 5681.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:5681

SCIENTIFIC FINDING: WET CUPPING IN CLINICAL STUDIES

Al-Bedah and colleagues (2016) assessed ***14 randomised clinical trials*** of wet cupping. Nine showed positive effects, especially for ***low back pain, neck pain, carpal tunnel syndrome and arm pain***. Five showed no difference, including for migraine and metabolic syndrome.

The authors concluded that the evidence for ***musculoskeletal pain*** is ***promising***, but better-quality studies are still needed.

STUDY REFERENCES:

Al-Bedah, A.M.N. et al. (2016). Evaluation of Wet Cupping Therapy: Systematic Review of Randomized Clinical Trials. The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine. https://doi.org/10.1089/acm.2016.0193

REFLECTION — A CAREFUL SUNNAH

This Hadith mentions three methods, but he ***forbade*** his ummah from al-kayy (branding with fire) — showing that Islam chooses the treatment that ***causes least harm***. So too with cupping: it should be done

by a trained practitioner, with clean equipment, and it does not replace medical treatment for serious illness.

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SKIN AND THE SENSATION OF PAIN

SURAH AN-NISA' 4:56

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا سَوۡفَ نُصۡلِيهِمۡ نَارٗا كُلَّمَا نَضِجَتۡ جُلُودُهُم
بَدَّلۡنَٰهُمۡ جُلُودًا غَيۡرَهَا لِيَذُوقُواْ ٱلۡعَذَابَۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمٗا ٥٦

Indeed, those who disbelieve in Our verses - We will drive them into a Fire. Every time their skins are roasted through We will replace them with other skins so they may taste the punishment. Indeed, Allah is ever Exalted in Might and Wise.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/4:56

COMMENTARY ON 4:56 — CONTINUOUS PUNISHMENT

Imam Ibn Kathir explains that this verse tells of ***the continuity of punishment*** for those who disbelieve: ***"Every time their skins are roasted through We will replace them with other skins so they may taste the punishment"***. He cites a report from Ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما that their skins will be replaced with new skins, white like paper. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 4:56

Contemporary I'jaz 'Ilmi writers see in this verse an indication that ***the skin*** plays a major role in feeling pain — since the replaced skin is the condition ***"so they may taste the punishment"***.

SCIENTIFIC FINDING: PAIN SENSORS IN THE SKIN — AND ELSEWHERE

Dubin and Patapoutian (2010) explain that ***nociceptors*** — specialised sensory neurons — detect damaging stimuli at the skin, such as extreme temperature and pressure, and send signals to the brain.

But nociceptors are not only in the skin. Baral and colleagues (2019) state that they also innervate the ***joints, bones, muscles and mucosal tissues***.

STUDY REFERENCES:

Dubin, A.E. & Patapoutian, A. (2010). Nociceptors: the sensors of the pain pathway. Journal of Clinical Investigation, 120(11), 3760–3772. https://doi.org/10.1172/JCI42843

Baral, P., Udit, S. & Chiu, I.M. (2019). Pain and immunity: implications for host defence. Nature Reviews Immunology. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41577-019-0147-2

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SCIENTIFIC FINDING: DEEP BURNS: LESS PAINFUL, NOT PAINLESS

Traditionally, full-thickness (third-degree) burns were thought to be painless because the nerve endings in the skin are destroyed. Singer and colleagues (2015) studied 507 patients and found such burns to be ***only slightly less painful*** — most patients still felt pain.

STUDY REFERENCES:

Singer, A.J. et al. (2015). Association between burn characteristics and pain severity. The American Journal of Emergency Medicine. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajem.2015.05.043

REFLECTION — A LIMITED MATCH, NOT PROOF

Science confirms that the skin is rich in pain nerve endings, and that destroying those nerves reduces sensation — in general harmony with the picture in the verse. But the popular claims that pain is felt "***only*** in the skin" or that deep burns are "***not*** painful" are inaccurate. More importantly, the purpose of the verse is ***a warning of punishment***, not a lesson in neurology.

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BETWEEN HARMONY AND CAUTION

The table below summarises the assessment of each claim in this article.

POPULAR CLAIMS AND THEIR ASSESSMENT

CLAIMS OFTEN HEARD	ASSESSMENT
"The Qur'an describes the stages of the embryo exactly."	In harmony at the level of general concept; matching terms with Carnegie stages is still debated.
"The two-year nursing period is confirmed by the WHO."	In harmony. The WHO recommends breastfeeding up to two years or beyond.
"Honey cures every disease."	Exaggerated. The verse says "in which there is healing". Strong evidence for burns; unsuitable for babies under one year.
"The black seed can replace medicine."	Wrong. Beneficial as support; the quality of clinical evidence is mostly low.
"Cupping cures many diseases."	Promising evidence for muscle and joint pain; weak for other conditions.
"Pain is only in the skin; deep burns are painless."	Inaccurate. Nociceptors are also in muscles and joints; deep burns are only slightly less painful.

REFLECTION — WHY THIS CAUTION MATTERS

In medicine, exaggerated claims do not only harm the credibility of da'wah — they can ***endanger life***, if someone abandons necessary treatment. Scholarly honesty here is part of the trust of protecting life.

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LESSONS AND CONCLUSION

LESSONS FROM THIS ARTICLE

First: Seeking treatment is sunnah. Every disease has a cure (Sahih al-Bukhari 5678).

Second: Reliance on Allah with effort. Honey, the black seed and cupping are means, not substitutes for necessary treatment.

Third: Complete the nursing if able. Two complete years is the completion, with flexibility by mutual consent.

Fourth: Keep safe. Do not give honey to babies under one year.

Fifth: Be honest in da'wah. Distinguish strong evidence from exaggerated claims.

CONCLUSION

The six medical indications in this article show that the Qur'an and Sunnah bring ***health guidance full of wisdom***. Some are clearly in harmony with science — nursing, honey for wounds — and others still await stronger evidence. Yet the true Healer is Allah: ***"when I am ill, it is He who cures me"*** (26:80). And Allah knows best.

In sha Allah, the series **Exploring the Qur'an & Science** will continue with the same method: the Qur'an, authentic Hadith, the exegesis of the scholars, and solid science.

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Sahih Muslim 2215; Sahih al-Bukhari 5688. https://sunnah.com/muslim:2215a

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SURAH AL-BAQARAH 2:261

مَّثَلُ ٱلَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ أَمۡوَٰلَهُمۡ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنۢبَتَتۡ سَبۡعَ سَنَابِلَ فِي كُلِّ سُنۢبُلَةٖ مِّاْئَةُ حَبَّةٖۗ وَٱللَّهُ يُضَٰعِفُ لِمَن يَشَآءُۚ وَٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ٢٦١

The example of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is like a seed [of grain] which grows seven spikes; in each spike is a hundred grains. And Allah multiplies [His reward] for whom He wills. And Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/2:261

SURAH SABA' 34:39

قُلۡ إِنَّ رَبِّي يَبۡسُطُ ٱلرِّزۡقَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ مِنۡ عِبَادِهِۦ وَيَقۡدِرُ لَهُۥۚ وَمَآ أَنفَقۡتُم مِّن شَيۡءٖ فَهُوَ يُخۡلِفُهُۥۖ وَهُوَ خَيۡرُ ٱلرَّٰزِقِينَ ٣٩

Say, "Indeed, my Lord extends provision for whom He wills of His servants and restricts [it] for him. But whatever thing you spend [in His cause] - He will compensate it; and He is the best of providers."

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/34:39

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 2588

حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ أَيُّوبَ، وَقُتَيْبَةُ، وَابْنُ، حُجْرٍ قَالُوا حَدَّثَنَا إِسْمَاعِيلُ، - وَهُوَ ابْنُ جَعْفَرٍ - عَنِ الْعَلاَءِ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ « مَا نَقَصَتْ صَدَقَةٌ مِنْ مَالٍ وَمَا زَادَ اللَّهُ عَبْدًا بِعَفْوٍ إِلاَّ عِزًّا وَمَا تَوَاضَعَ أَحَدٌ لِلَّهِ إِلاَّ رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ ».

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Charity does not decrease wealth.

Allah does not increase a servant who forgives except in honour. And no one humbles himself for the sake of Allah except that Allah raises him in rank."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Yahya bin Ayyub, Qutaibah bin Sa'id and 'Ali bin Hujr, from Isma'il bin Ja'far, from al-'Ala' bin 'Abd al-Rahman, from his father 'Abd al-Rahman bin Ya'qub, from Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه .

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Virtue, Good Manners and Joining the Ties of Kinship (Kitab al-Birr wa al-Silah wa al-Adab), chapter on the encouragement of forgiveness and humility, Hadith No. 2588.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim.

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:2588

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 1631

حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ أَيُّوبَ، وَقُتَيْبَةُ - يَعْنِي ابْنَ سَعِيدٍ - وَابْنُ حُجْرٍ قَالُوا حَدَّثَنَا إِسْمَاعِيلُ، - هُوَ ابْنُ جَعْفَرٍ - عَنِ الْعَلاَءِ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ « إِذَا مَاتَ الإِنْسَانُ انْقَطَعَ عَنْهُ عَمَلُهُ إِلاَّ مِنْ ثَلاَثَةٍ إِلاَّ مِنْ صَدَقَةٍ جَارِيَةٍ أَوْ عِلْمٍ يُنْتَفَعُ بِهِ أَوْ وَلَدٍ صَالِحٍ يَدْعُو لَهُ ».

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "When a person dies, his deeds come to an end except for three: an ongoing charity, knowledge that is benefited from, or a righteous child who prays for him."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Yahya bin Ayyub, Qutaibah bin Sa'id and 'Ali bin Hujr, from Isma'il bin Ja'far, from al-'Ala' bin 'Abd al-Rahman, from his father 'Abd al-Rahman bin Ya'qub, from Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه .

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Wills (Kitab al-Wasiyyah), chapter on the reward that reaches a person after his death, Hadith No. 1631.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim.

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:1631

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